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# Gospel of Peace

BY  
KH. KAMAL-UD-DIN

*Editor Islamic Review*

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## GOSPEL OF PEACE

Sermon delivered by Khwaja Kamaluddin at the Mosque, Woking, on occasion of the Muslim festival, the *Eid-ul-Fitr*, on the 10th of July, 1918.

MAY the Lord of all nations bring to an end this horrible Armageddon, and from its ashes work out a universal and everlasting peace ; not an armed peace as we had before, or a temporary armistice to enable the devil of scientific barbarism to gather force again to extirpate humanity and to devastate the world, but a peace which will consist in the negation of all those sordid and selfish principles of life which from time to time have caused the unsheathing of the sword in the past history of the world. May the Preserver and Sustainer of all humanity bring us a peace with such noble and high principles of conduct that may enable every man to claim liberty and freedom, as his birthright, and to consider every country as his motherland. I mean by peace the establishment of that comfort of body, mind, and soul which religions from God have come from time to time to substantiate on this planet of ours ; a peace which is synonymous with the Kingdom of God, and which has visited us from the days of the Prophets—Moses, Jesus, and others—and which found its last shape in the concluding days of our Holy Prophet Muhammad—peace be upon them all—when all kinds of selfishness were negated ; when people, inspired with a new sense of humanity, merged their individual consciousness into a cosmic one ; when everything that means “ Mine ” was sacrificed at the altar of “ Thine ” ; when jealous competition and evil rivalry became unknown and gave their place to devotion and sacrifice for the cause of humanity. In order to secure an everlasting peace, the world again needs a wider outlook of humanity which, demolishing all barriers of class, country, or race, may weld once more, as it did in the days

of Muhammad (peace be upon him), all the conflicting elements of humanity into one harmonious whole.

Thirteen days more will complete the fourth year of the day which ignited this world-wide conflagration that has not only consumed everything best in humanity, but has brought all that was worst in man to the surface. Man has incarnated himself in the devil or devil in man; all landmarks of civilization have been demolished and all signposts of humanity have disappeared. Even a Nero should feel ashamed of that desolation which has overtaken rich lands and beautiful cities. One fails even to imagine the horror of that cruel vandalism which knows no distinction between the military and the civilian, which makes no distinction between the battlefield or the hospital whether on land or on sea, which demolishes even the houses of God, and brings those harmless souls to a sudden annihilation who on their penitent knees in a religious house are imploring the loving Father in Heaven to put an end to this manifestation of the devilry.

And this all—what an irony of fate!—in the exclusive realms of the Master who came to kill the devil, and who for his gentle teaching has rightly been called the Prince of Peace. Has not the Church got any power to reclaim her strayed flock and spare the world from this terrible fate? I am afraid not. If the Church was knee-deep in blood in mediæval days, one could understand on account of the darkest ignorance of those days. But what about the Church of the present day, when culture and theology go hand in hand? Have we not had to look to Germany in pre-war days for what could be said best in exposition of religion? Has not the best of theology, as the Dean of St. Paul's said last year, come from the same side? But how the pulpit from the very same country has been manipulated by the lords of the war! All pulpit utterances are military sermons and an attempt to justify measures adopted. The simple and unambiguous words of the Master, which were the real gospel of peace, have been distorted and given a wrong interpretation to further war ends. Unfortunately since the days of the Reformation the clerics have always enslaved the laity. But the Church is all the same everywhere, whether in the East or West. Religion more or less has all over the world been manipulated to help individual and political aims. The wolf in man has always tried to prowl about and

pounce on the lamb in the garb of a shepherd. More human blood is said to have been shed in the name of religion by its self-motived votaries than in the name of any other human institution. Is it then surprising to find some advocates of materialism deprecating religion and calling it an institution of garbed cruelty and covered bloodshed, and therefore fit to be stamped out from the pale of humanity?<sup>1</sup> But have they discovered a better plan and some safer scheme to bring millennium on the earth? Is not their own philosophy of life the chief cause of what we are suffering from in these terrible days? Is not the same superman of Nietzsche who would have his will executed regardless of consequences to others their ideal? Is it not the same sordid theory of the survival of the fittest which would not allow the unfit even to breathe on the earth of God, but to subserve to the self-motived interest of the fittest? The Lord of the War with his progeny has come forward in the front to establish his fitness and to bring every one down to his domineering feet. No, theories like these propounded by earthly philosophers will certainly not bring any good to us. Religion, and only religion in its pristine purity, is our salvation; but not the religion of the Church, whether in the East or in the West. In the case of the latter, the best of her exponents have declared their dissatisfaction with it. Even before the war they did feel the necessity of revising the whole superstructure of the Church of Christ. The war again has shown the hollowness of the system and the various utterances which from time to time have come from within the Church during the last four years simply come to endorse our opinion. Dean Inge looks for the appearance of another prophet to save the situation. Interesting as this statement is, it is not complimentary to the body he belongs to. But the Church is the same wherever we go. What a hopeless outlook and heart-breaking prospect! But we need not go to this self-constituted warden of religion. Let us go humbly to those Masters of Humanity who received religion of God from God Himself and became His best spokesmen to His creatures, viz. the prophets of the world. Let us sit humbly at the feet of Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, and their descendants. Let us approach Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and other prophets of the world in a true Muslim

<sup>1</sup> *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum* (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*).

spirit and accept them as our guide to work out our salvation out of this humanity-killing catastrophe.

And what is the Muslim spirit? Allow me to enlighten you on the question in the very words of the Qur-án, the Gospel of Islam. The Book, in order to define the Muslim attitude towards the prophets of the world, enjoins me to say the following as the formula of my faith :—

“Say: We believe in God, and in what has been sent down to you (Muhammad) and in what has been sent to Abraham, Jacob, Ishmael, Isaac, and their descendants. We believe in what has been given to Moses and Jesus and all the other prophets of the world (raised in any part or corner of it). We (Muslims) make no distinction between prophet and prophet, as we are submissive to Allah, Who has sent them to us.”

This is the Muslim attitude, and is it not sufficient to bring conflicts in the province of religion nearer to harmony? A Muslim has to submit to the will of the Most High, and he must go to all His messengers wherever they may be to accept His revelation. Do not think that any man or any tribe or any race is a chosen one of God. All are equally His children. If my Allah knows no distinction in dispensing physical sustenance, He is more impartial in dispensing spiritual nourishment. Go to all these prophets, again I say, and you have the true gospel of life which can only save humanity from this demon of selfishness.

I need not read to you long homilies and sermons on the subject. I would refer you to that noble aim of religious life which has been depicted in one word by all the prophets in different accents and stresses, and that is “to walk humbly with the Lord,” “to imbue ourselves with Divine attributes,” as the Prophet of Islam says, and, thus to be able to say in the words of Jesus, “I and my Father are one.” By reaching that stage of spirituality we do not become God, nor any one has been so. See those men whom ignorance and credulity has clothed with divinity. Have they not shown ordinary human infirmities? What of you, friends, as some of you have been taken up with the queer notion of being equal to God? To think so is only blasphemy. When we say, “I and my Father are one,” we mean we have killed our own ego, we destroy our own individuality, we subordinate our will to that

Highest Will, we conduct ourselves in absolute submission to Him, and in this Muslim (submissive) attitude we become at one with Him. Remember one who said, "I and my Father are one." He also said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14 : 28). "Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, that is God."

This was the sole object of religion given to us by Jesus and others. But unfortunately some of these great men which through their complete submission to God reached this exalted position, and through their example showed us our capacity and our limit of progress, have been deified. If Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," if Krishna in moments of his ecstasies proclaimed, "I am Bhagwan (God)," and if only a few centuries ago one of the humblest of Muhammad's devotees, in a similar state of mind, startled the world by saying, "Al Haq," "I am the Truth (God)," and showed miracles after miracles sufficient to clothe him with Divinity in the eyes of credulity, these great men did not claim any Divinity for themselves, nor did they refer to any exclusive achievement. They spoke in their representative character as men. Each of them was Son of Man, and they showed the height of spirituality, which is accessible to every child of humanity. The world owes a great obligation to Muhammad, who extricated it from this gross ignorance when he made a world-wide announcement. "God says," he said, "When a man utterly submits himself to Me, I love him; and when I love him I become his eyes with which he sees, his ears with which he hears, his tongue with which he talks, and his hands with which he holds, and his legs with which he walks."

This is the Gospel which Muhammad brings in the name of Islam to humanity, and in it lies not only the realization of what may be called the highest ideal in religion, but on it, and exclusively on it, as I will show further, depends the salvation of the world for ever from the cruel clutches of this Armageddon and the establishment of everlasting peace all over the world. Through the fulfilment of the law, as he himself admits, Jesus was enabled to say, "I and my Father are one." Through observing fully "Karam-Kand," which means submission to Divine commandment, Krishna could say, "I am Bhagwan." Muhammad—Peace be upon them all—not reached the top-

most rung of the ladder, on which these Masters were climbing, but from his exalted position he tells you all "Aná Basharun mislukum," I am only a man like you. You are all physiologically equal; physical equality postulates spiritual equality. Jesus always styled himself as son of man; what was achieved by him is open to every other son of man. It has been said of us that we are after the image of God, but image without a soul and spirit. Walk humbly with God as Jesus did and others did, and that image will become animated with the spirit of God Himself. And you will not only be able to give sight to the blind, to give hearing to the deaf, and, in short, to give life to the lifeless, but you yourself will be Sons of Peace, and the Kingdom of God will descend upon you. But have you ever tried to realize what limbs and joints are of God, what kind of eye and ear He possesses, with what hands He holds things and dispenses them? If the Holy Prophet of Islam tells you, "Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," let me tell you on his behalf what are the attributes of the Most High. Open the Qur-án, and at its very outset the following four attributes are given in the beginning words of the opening chapter of the Qur-án:—"Alhamdo Lilláhi Rabbil'álimin Arrahman Arrahim Máliki yaumiddín."

Rabbul Álimin—the Creator, the Provider, the Sustainer, and the Upbringer of all the worlds, of all the time and ages, and of all the races and nations, Whose bounties and gifts makes no distinction between race and race and come to every one; Who in His dispensation acts as Rahmán, the Beneficent Lord, whose benevolence looks to the needs of every one, even before the need comes into existence. Does not every atom in the universe bear eloquent testimony to these His two grand attributes? The earth with all its resources, He has made open to all, but it is man who would not allow his fellow-creatures to have an equal share in it with him. Is it not after all at the bottom of all human trouble? Had man put his humble foot in the great footprints of God which leave their impressions in bold writs on every span of land, wars would have ended, bloodshed finished, and criminality in all its shades have gone into exile. Be creatures of Rahmán to others. Let your benevolence go to the need of every one gratuitously, without distinction of country, colour, and class, because so has been your Creator to you in His blessings, and the world would

reach its millennium. His third attribute is "Rahím," Who out of His compassion comes with thousandfold reward for every action of man. Put one seed in the ground. You have tilled the ground and watered it properly, your labour cannot go beyond it. Wait, for a few months only, and the blessings of God come in the form of a hundred grains of corn for your one grain. Had the wretched sordidness of man left him to walk humbly with His Lord in this aspect of His Godhood, there would have been no trouble arising from the question of capital and labour. Is not capital sucking the very blood of labour and trying to take his pound of flesh from the bleeding breast of the workman? The capitalists should have been thankful to God through their actions. Lip gritudes carry no weight with the Lord. Their gratitude ought to have consisted in paying more to the labourers than they deserve, and in the long run the capitalists would not have been the losers.

But what about the wicked and the culprits? Evil has been as old as humanity. How to deal with them? If they do not lead a godly life, should we keep silent and through these humanitarian principles, as one would say, provide to them a premium on license and wickedness? I say, "No." Again I say, "Walk humbly with your Lord, Who is 'Málikí Yaumiddín,'" the Master of the Day of Requital and of the Day of Judgment. The Book of God, in choosing the word "Málik," which means master or owner, has given us a very vivid and interesting insight into the dealing of the Lord with the delinquents. He has not been called here as a judge Who, bound with hard and fast rules of the law, is unable to show mercy to a sinner without taking any compensation for the sin—Who, in order to meet the ends of justice and to satisfy His merciful nature as well, looks for sacrifices and arranges vicarious atonements. No, friends, it is not so. This is neither justice nor mercy. Justice, at least, not to one who will have to atone for others; and mercy with compensation is no mercy, it is only business. Look at the innumerable gifts of God which encompass you all around, which are all undeserved and unmerited. Has He not shown His mercy, without compensation, that He needs it in the matter of remitting my sin? Think upon the meaning of Málik, i.e. "Owner." He is my Owner, and I, though a sinner, am His own property. Is not an owner deeply inter-

ested in the preservation of his property? Some features of the property He may not like. He will try to reclaim it, but in a way which may not destroy it, and this is what Nature all around bears witness to. Every action which Nature takes for dismemberment of an organism is immediately followed by reconstruction. There is no absolute destruction. Decay and corruption in organization demands the break up of the frame, but this derangement is only for the rearrangement. Autumn comes not to destroy, but to release the trunks of the trees of the refuse and what is unnecessary and to prepare them for fresh life. These are different forms of punishment coming from the hands of God, and they are quite characteristic of the Being whose interest in the creation is that of an owner in the thing owned. Do punish those who have violated the law, who are the spreaders of wickedness and sin. But not with a view to extirpate them, but with a view to reclaim them to a better order.

You may say that I am dealing with impossibilities, and I am reading to you homilies of a visionary idealist. No, brethren. You are quite capable of showing these Divine morals in your mode of life. They come from a Book which says: "Lá yukalliffuu yukallifullaha nufsun illa wus'áhá."—God never burdens any one beyond the extent of his power. No matter what may be the extent of our sordidness, no matter how engrossed we may be in our selfish ends, but all of us do exert these morals every day, though of course within limited area. We follow the attributes of Rabb, of Rahmán, of Rahím, and of Málik. We are all or most of us blessed with families, we have children and babies; do we not provide them with everything they need, do we not nourish them and sustain them? Yes, we do; and in a metaphorical sense we are Rabb of our own children. Do we not look to their needs sometimes years before those needs come into existence? Have we not invested money in property, and in various other forms, to be used by our children when they will reach such and such age, and this all not in an obligatory way but gratuitously? By doing so we have stepped in the footprints of Rahmán. These children, or sometimes your friends, do a little thing to please you, and your reward comes hundred-fold, and in doing so you are walking humbly with the



Lord, Who is Rahím. And what about the mischievousness of your children? Would you punish them to death? Would you be inimical to them in your admonitions? Now you take a very hard rod, but in its exercise you are very soft, because your interest in them is that of an owner in the thing owned. We simply want a reclamation, and not annihilation. Thus you have acted as a true image of Rabb, Rahmán, and Málik, no doubt within a limited area. Extend these limits for the exercise of these Divine morals to those who live beyond the pale of those who are near and dear to you; and this demand is not an impossibility. All this you do every day when you are inspired with a strong sense of patriotism. Your earnings do go to the nourishment, help, and need of those who can legitimately claim the charity of your patriotism; and this war at least has been in some sense a blessing. It has actualized all these morals. Look at your magistracy, how lenient they have become with the delinquencies of those who fight for us, because we are interested in the preservation of our forces. Is it not the same "Málikí Yaumiddín" who is guiding the principles of punishment nowadays? What is wanting now is to extend the exercise of these Divine morals beyond the limits of patriotism and bring them to the benefit of those also who do not belong to your race, country, or class; and this again I say is not impossible. The war has supplied an occasion for the exhibition of these virtues. Have not more than thirty nations joined the cause of the Allies? You are doing the same to them as you could have done to your own countrymen. Have you not fought for Belgium? Does not your charity go to the Serbs? Have you not shed your blood for France? Whatever may be the motive of each nation at the back, but under the emergencies of the moment, more than half the world on one side, and the rest on the other, have sufficiently shown the capability of man to extend his sympathy and fellow-feeling to those belonging to other races, colours, and countries, and thus to some extent man is walking humbly with the Lord in his attributes as Rabb, Rahmán, Rahím, and Málik. These virtues one may style as virtues that come out of necessity, but try to cultivate them, and make a permanent asset of them for humanity. The present state of society, as the Premier said the other day, is a libel on Jesus; I say

it is a libel on God and all His prophets, including Jesus. In future, the Premier says, every country will be of every man, and the earnings of every one shall go to the need of others. Then the Kingdom of God, I say, will descend on earth, as it did in the days of Muhammad. Angels will hover on earth with their pinions of blessings on us. The earth will see its promised millennium, and we will receive our real heritage, viz. God with man. We will soar on the borders of Divinity; and beyond that we cannot go. Those who think otherwise are deluded, and what they take for God in some cases is only evolved humanity. Divinity transcends even the limits of metaphor and similes leave apart its actual realization. And even these holy precincts I am speaking about are not opened to the unworthy. The only qualification which enables us to reach Divine borders is to walk humbly with God on the lines of benevolence and charity. Try to be true worshippers of Rabb, Rahmán, Rahím, and Malík—to worship God, as Count Tolstoi says, is to desire what God desires, and He desires universal welfare. Exert yourself for universal welfare, and the door of Divinity will be opened to you. This is the first condition of a godly life; without it all your meditation and “sacred silence” is illusion. They are helpful, but with this condition precedent.

May God enable us to do so, and relieve the world from the calamity we have been drawn into through the sordid selfishness of man. Let us magnify our God and glorify Him in the words of our Prophet, and I ask my Muslim brethren to join me in saying, “Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar la iláha Mallah Wallaho Akbar, Wallaho Akbar, Walillah helhamd” (“God is great, God is great; there is no deity but Allah. God is great, God is great, and all praise and glory is due to Him”).

## FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

### ISLAM—PEACE AND WAY TO PEACE.

ISLAM as a Faith is constituted of five principles: the formula of the Faith (Kalima Tayyiba), Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving, and Pilgrimage.

Islam, as it literally signifies, is a religion of peace, and through these above-noted five principles it has tried to establish peace in the world and the hereafter, which only can be the goal of a religion from God.

Various rules have been laid down by different religious systems of the world for the attainment of the above object, but the religion which has been expounded by Muhammad (peace be upon him!), glories in the fact that it sets human reason as the test of its beneficence. The following looks very impressive and fascinating—in words—“Blessed are they who are peacemakers.” But just to say so is one thing, and to plan and scheme out ways and means whereby peace and fellowship may become the practical rule of human life is another. Islam gives due weight to human nature when it attempts to solve those difficulties which hamper the growth of any useful institution in the world. Accordingly, if we desire to secure peace, we must in the first place contemplate those circumstances which destroy it. Wars, private or national rivalries, and crimes are but the synonyms of disorder and the absence of peace.

#### THE PROBLEM OF “THINE AND MINE.”

All of them have sprung from a common source, the one perennial root-cause, viz. “This is thine, and that is mine.” The successive stages in the life of a family would perhaps furnish a very fitting illustration of my theme. There is a time up to which all the children in a family represent the various parts of one body-politic (family). The parents look to all their needs, and the affection they have one to the other is the common bond which unites them into one single whole. But the solidarity of this whole begins to be a little shaken when this passion for “thine and mine” begins to find expression—however feebly—in their little acts and words. This is the beginning of what causes disintegration in the midst of not one family, but a larger social unit as well, viz. a nation or a community, and its still larger prototype the whole human race. The wars of one nation against another only represent on a very large scale the petty jealousy between one member of a family against another. The self-same motive of “thine and mine” being responsible everywhere.

Similarly we find this idea of “thine and mine” as the chief incentive to all civil crimes. We wish to possess the belongings of others by questionable means, and it leads to crime. Usurpation, theft, fraud are only different forms of unfair means which we use to convert “thine” into “mine” in a wrong way. Let us enlarge our view-point and study the act of a whole nation in this light. We should find that the real aim of all wars and international rivalries lies in the motive of the rapacity of one to dispossess the other of a tempting prize, which may be a large piece of unexploited land, some trading interest, or any other similar object. However insignificant this source of temptation, the devastation and bloodshed which results from them is often appalling. Consequently the first concern of an institution aiming at the establishment of peace in the world should,

in the first place, be to attempt most seriously to solve this problem of "thine and mine." For where we find this motive of "thine and mine" in its abnormal aspects giving rise to quarrels and wars, we find it also the fountain-head of all our good activities. It is both a blessing and a curse, and the way how it might only be the former, and never the latter, is the duty and province of the religion from God to discover and expound. This idea of "thine and mine" is not altogether valueless. It creates, as a matter of fact, that instinct which makes people active in the hope that the reward of these activities would be theirs. If there were any law by which the price of John's labour could be handed over to James, the end of civilization would not be difficult to see. Any attempt to do away entirely with this personal motive of "thine and mine" would be a failure. Those who have tried to do so have miserably failed in their efforts. They denude men from the very incentive to action. This unnatural phase of Socialism has proved to be its grave in the West. We read the same about Jesus Christ. He was a true prophet of God. He believed and tried to preach that all the bloodshed in the world was entirely due to the presence of the idea of "thine and mine." But he did not succeed in his mission. The age, perhaps, was too sordid to receive his message. He was taken to be a seditionist by his own men and a violator of the *status quo*. Candidly speaking, if what we find in the New Testament be taken as a genuine record of Jesus, his compatriots were not to be blamed too much if they could not see their way to endorse the visionary view of the dreamer. Leave apart others; will those who have undertaken to shepherd his flock care to act upon his following views?

"And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither have two coats apiece.

"And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

"And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them."—ST. LUKE ix. 3-5.

The prime need of the world is not the ideal in its abstract form, but it is, on the other hand, the laying down of such practical rules and guidances—a course of life-discipline which may enable us to read abstract ideas in the terms of actualities. The work of a reformer or preacher should not end at "Blessed-are-those-who-are-peace-makers," but should advance into the realm of practicalities and soar into regions of realities. It should definitely direct how this peace is to be made and the peace-making psychology created. That this highly personal motive "thine and mine" be allowed to work within desirable limits, and a rule of actual practice be brought into existence, it is desirable that practical ways be suggested which would regulate the activities of human life. Instead of bringing about equilibrium in the possession

of individuals by means of force, it would be much better to inspire them with the spirit of charity and self-sacrifice. To deprive people of the fruits of their honest labour would not only be unnatural and preposterous, but freeze as well the very spirit of energy and bring the wheel of civilization to immobility. The world would be more prosperous and peaceful, too, if all were allowed to reap fully the benefits of their work, with a strong sense created in them to part voluntarily with their earnings in relief of distress and misery. This will chasten the evil aspect of the spirit "thine and mine" into a blessing.

This was a big problem, and the Last of the Prophets came to solve it. He lays down through these five pillars of Islam a course of life which, without killing the instinct of "thine and mine"—the sum-total of human consciousness—atrophies its evil consequences.

Nothing would deter us from giving up our all for the sake, and to win the goodwill of our object of adoration. Islam points that object to be Allah and it expects its votaries to stint nothing in all that they possess to win the goodwill of One who is the Best, the Holiest, and in every respect most fit to be the object of every true human devotion. "By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (benevolently) out of what you have"—so says the Qur-án.

Let me now show you a few of those things we love and for the achievement of which this guiding motive of "thine and mine" becomes a source of disaster rather than that of bliss for men, and makes them authors of limitless evil and harm. Money, as we all know, is the great token of exchange for everything in the world, and is obtained by spending one's time in the best possible manner. Time itself means money. We need time to accomplish all great purposes. None of our great national triumphs would be realized until we spent our time freely in their pursuit. Next after time come those means which satisfy our physical hunger: the provisions which sustain life, and keep the vigour of life alive in us. After these are the needs of our body in the way of apparel. Next in the upward scale is our want of conjugal life. We are animals, though rational, and our natural state of life after we are grown up demands a reasonable satisfaction of our human instincts which directs us to find in a conjugal life the best form of a happy and contented life; as a necessary corollary to the last mentioned is our need of finding means to successfully bring up our children and to provide all that is needful for their future happiness in life. The last great object of our attachment and devotion is our nation and the country to which we belong. All of these more or less directly move our activities in life, and become useful or harmful to other fellow-men according to the degree and interest with which they are served. The passion for our country as for instance, which we designate patriotism, has always been the cause of immense blood-spilling and ruin when it began to work beyond the

limit of self-determination. Let it not follow from this that the love of one's self, one's belongings, one's wife and children, and of one's country, are nothing but evil. Far from it. On the other hand, man being a social creature depends for his well-ordered and progressive existence on these essential main-springs of his activities. The harm lies in his attachment to these interests to such a degree as would lead him to trample on the rights of others. A religion under which the rich man is confronted with the insuperable difficulty of making the camel pass through the eye of the needle before he can enter the kingdom of heaven has never appealed to humanity. It would cause inertia and lethargy as it did in the days of the Middle Ages. We need a religion from God which may create the happy means and save us from the disasters of going to extremes. Religion without such solution is myth and fable and of no consequence to mankind. Mere belief in certain events in the history of the world is only fetishism in different form.

A true religion would create in us a spirit which if on the one hand would induce us to be ever-active in winning riches of life, it on the other would also make us ready to part with them in making others happy. It should create in us a spirit of self-sacrifice—making it meritorious in our eyes to spend our earnings in the interest of the other. Man is a worshipping animal. He has always adored the Unseen, and has ever been ready to give up everything near and dear to him to please the Deity. Islam has on the one hand, therefore, prescribed a course of discipline under which a Muslim would learn to give up his time, his wealth, his eatables and drinks, and his family and country attachments in the way of God, and on the other hand the religion of God impresses on the minds of its votaries that the cause of Allah is another name for the cause of humanity.

#### PRAYER.

In the first place, Islam enjoins upon me to abandon all my worldly occupations, however absorbing they be, at the time of offering my devotion and my duty to my Lord. I am commanded to rise very early in the morning, and after making proper ablutions to stand in the Holy Presence of my Maker. Similarly I am commanded to repeat these exercises five times a day, in order that they may serve as constant reminders to me of my duty to spend my time in interest other than mine. If these holy, selfless, and pious activities so many times a day become the regular course of my life, it would not be a difficult thing for me to spend my time to help the happiness of others at the interest of my own business.

#### FASTING.

In reality Islam has, through its rational teachings, induced its votaries not only to abandon that unlawful to them, but even to give up what otherwise rightfully belongs to them in the hope that it may tend to the welfare and happiness of

others. For one who has become accustomed under the inspiration of Islam to take such a view of his relations to his mundane connections and belongings, it is never difficult to manifest a spirit of utter self-sacrifice in the cause of the Lord. For how utterly impossible it becomes for a man to acquire by foul means what he would cheerfully give up for the service of others, though his own by all laws of justice and equity. Here is the way how Islam meets and provides for the case. It is quite admissible for one to eat and drink according to his means, but when we see that this same eating and drinking is given up for some time by a man through fear of nobody except for the love of God, then certainly it would be too hard for him to even over-indulge in it under ordinary circumstances. Likewise one has every right to enjoy the company and society of one's wife, but when he gives it up within prescribed time during the month of Ramadan, without any compulsion, he truly has developed his character to the extent of not even casting a lustful glance on any other woman in ordinary times. Prayer and fasting therefore are the first rungs on the ladder by which a genuine votary climbs higher and higher. Pass your eye down all the 90 per cent. of the crimes which darken our society, and you will surely find a cure for all of them in the simple expression spoken by Holy Muhammad, who says: "If people would become responsible as to the right use of what lies between their lips and their feet, I stand responsible for their entry into Paradise." Islam prescribes the cure for this in fasting; which does not aim merely at this that we should torture our body, but that we should cultivate the habit of disallowing to ourselves the pleasures that are not ours, by disallowing to ourselves for the love of God those that are rightfully ours.

#### POOR RATES.

Every Muslim is expected to take stock of his savings once a year, and has to disburse  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of this as "alms." Charity takes two different forms in Islam. One sort is optional and the other compulsory. The last named is called "zakát," the expenditure of which is not permissible to the payer himself. The "zakát" has to be paid into a fund under the supervision of a committee, who make use of it for eight different purposes as laid down in the Qur-án in this wise:—*"Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed over) them and those whose hearts are made to incline to truth and the ransoming of captives, and those in debt and in the way of Allah"*. An ordinance from Allah, and Allah is knowing, wise (9 : 60).

The expression "in the way of God," which is the translation of "Fí Sabílilláh" in the text, in the above verse signifies the dissemination of Islam and its truths to the non-Muslim. Similarly the fourth item of the disbursement of "zakát" refers to another aspect of Islamic propaganda. "Those whose hearts are made to incline to truth" are those

who come to their adhesion to Islam. Their conversion to the faith makes them an object of persecution, and sometimes deprives them of the comfort they have been used to. A portion of the "zakát" should go to guard the interest of and secure happiness to these new members of the Muslim fraternity. Thus the verse clearly lays a duty on every Muslim to devote the quarter of his "zakát" in the spread of Islam. Besides "zakát" other alms are undefinable. In the words of the Holy Prophet: "From giving a smile to one in distress, to devoting everything dear to you in the cause of humanity," is optional charity.

The provisions of old age pensions, parish relief measures, and other similar means of saving indigent members of a society from the ravages of poverty and want are but replicas of Islamic provisions of poor law.

It was Islam alone before all other religions of the world which systematized "alms" and gave charity the prestige and form of an institution. When asked what was the ultimate aim of "zakát," Holy Muhammad replied that it was a means whereby the rich had to give something out of their opulence for the help of those in need. Hence it is that by means of prayer, fasting, and alms, a Muslim, through giving up for the help and succour of others all that does belong to him, learns to practise rejecting all that does not belong to him lawfully. In this respect Islam is a wonderful system indeed.

I have pointed it out above that men's undue attachment to their worldly possessions, their relations and other objects, have been the fertile source of all manner of disorder in the world. To adequately meet this abuse, the tenet of Pilgrimage is laid down. Under this a Muslim has to undertake once in his life a journey to Mecca.<sup>1</sup> He learns through undergoing all the hardships of such a long, arduous journey, how it is to be deprived of the company of those near and dear to him. At some distance from the Holy Temple of the Lord all pilgrims have to divest themselves of their ordinary apparel and to don a uniform which is same for all. One sheet covers the upper body and the other the legs; and whatever the status of the votary the uniformity of the attire makes them all one and equal. I reserve a detailed description of other features of the "Haj" for a later article.

What I meant to show here was this, that through this Muslim institution the narrow patriotism of our day loses some of its worst aspects, and our feelings of love of our country become softened and regulated. Briefly, to revert to my original theme, Islam aims at the establishment of the real peace in the world, and to destroy every trace of all that tends to weaken such aim. Islam tries to show not only what real peace is, but also what constitutes and brings forth real peace. The recognition of "thine and mine" which brings forth happiness and comfort, also deters its proper course. Some remedy was needed to chasten it into something noble, and divest it of its abuse.

<sup>1</sup> See "Mecca in the Days of Pilgrimage," by the same. Price 2d.







